

Exodus 21:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

Analysis

And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

This judgment (mishpat) from the Book of the Covenant applies moral law to civil society. God's justice is comprehensive—addressing economic disputes, family relations, and community welfare. The case laws teach covenant people how to love God and neighbor practically. Through detailed ordinances, God shapes Israel as holy nation, distinct from pagan neighbors. These laws reveal God's character: just, merciful, concerned with details of everyday life.

Historical Context

The Book of the Covenant (Exodus 20:22-23:33) is Israel's foundational legal code, predating later expansions in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. It addresses civil, criminal, and ceremonial matters.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does this law reveal God's character—His justice, mercy, or holiness?
2. What New Testament principles build upon or fulfill this Old Testament regulation?

Interlinear Text

וְנִנְצַחַת
And he that smiteth his father or his mother put to death put to death
H5221 H1 H517 H4191 H4191

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